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**Testimony of State Representative Auden Grogins in support of
SB 445 An Act Concerning Certain Recommendations of the Task Force on the Sale of Cats and
Dogs from Inhumane Origins at Connecticut Pet Shops**

Environment Committee Public Hearing

Monday, March 17, 2013

Representative Gentile, Senator Meyer and members of the Environment Committee, for the record my name is State Representative Auden Grogins representing Bridgeport's 129th District and I am submitting testimony in favor of SB 445 An Act Concerning Certain Recommendations of the Task Force on the Sale of Cats and Dogs from Inhumane Origins at Connecticut Pet Shops.

First, let me say thank you for holding this public hearing and giving me the opportunity to testify in support of this important bill.

Last year, the Connecticut General Assembly passed legislation to create the Task Force on the Sale of Cats and Dogs from Inhumane Origins at Connecticut Pet Shops, which I was proud to serve on. As a task force, we were able to hold several public hearings and heard testimony from many animal welfare advocates, industry representatives and stakeholders on this issue. This bill seeks to adopt some of the recommendations which are critical to the humane treatment of cat and dogs that are sold to Connecticut residents by retail pet shops.

Among other things, this bill seeks to regulate the sale of dogs and cats in Connecticut and to strengthen our puppy lemon laws by reimbursing customers 150 percent of purchase price, if the cat or dog they purchase becomes ill or dies within twenty days. The bill also expands oversight and inspections of retail pet shops and increase fines for pet shops that sell animals from unlicensed breeders or those that have violations. This includes the prohibition of pet shops who purchase dogs from breeders that have a direct violations of U.S.D.A. regulations (which is one that poses an imminent threat to a dog's health and welfare) in the last two years or who have three indirect violations that affect a dog's welfare.

Although this bill did not include our recommendations to prohibit the sale of commercially bred dogs, and promote the sale of rescue dogs, I still believe it is a good start. I strongly believe the sale of dogs from sub-standard puppy mills is an issue that is not going away and is something we need to be mindful of in the future.

In closing, thank you again for raising this legislation and the opportunity to submit testimony here today. I look forward to working with the committee towards our shared goal of ensuring that the sale of dogs and cats in Connecticut is conducted in a civil and humane manner.

I fully support these measures as a legislator and a personal animal advocate.

Thank you.